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The situation in the Middle East

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Fifty-ninth year

Letter dated 20 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I enclose herewith a summary of violations committed by Israel from 4 to 8 January 2004.

Violations of airspace

Between 1010 and 1300 hours on 4 January 2004 an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flew over the sea west of Sidon at a distance of 10 miles from the coast and then circled over the area between Tyre and Damur at an altitude of four miles, thereby violating Lebanese airspace.

Between 1150 and 1300 hours on the same date, two Israeli helicopters circled over the occupied Shab`a farmlands. Furthermore, between 1405 and 1410 hours, an Israeli enemy war plane circled over the aforementioned farmlands at high altitude.

Between 1505 and 1520 hours on the same date, two Israeli helicopters circled over the Abad outpost opposite the villages of Hula and Mays al-Jabal, thereby violating Lebanese airspace.

Between 1825 and 1930 hours on the same date, two Israeli helicopters circled over the occupied Shab`a farmlands. Between 2125 and 2150 hours they returned and again circled over the aforementioned farmlands.

Between 0750 and 1300 hours on 5 January 2004 an Israeli war plane circled at great altitude over the area opposite Ra's al-Naqurah, breaking the sound barrier and violating Lebanese airspace. It later returned and between 1530 and 1610 hours it circled at great altitude over the occupied Shab`a farmlands.

Between 1530 and 1600 hours on 6 January 2004 an Israeli war plane circled at great altitude over the occupied Shab`a farmlands.

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Violations of territorial waters

Between 0030 and 0200 hours on 2 January 2004, in the open sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an Israeli military boat fired two flare bombs. It returned later, at 1830 hours, and fired a flare bomb over the water.

At 0030 hours on 3 January 2004, in the open sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an Israeli military boat fired a flare bomb over the water.

Between 1715 and 2000 hours on the same date, four military boats belonging to the Israeli enemy were seen sailing in occupied Palestinian territorial waters.

At 2140 hours on 4 January 2004, in the open sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an Israeli military boat fired two flare bombs and a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire over the water.

Between 1830 and 2230 hours on 5 January 2004, in the open sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an Israeli military boat fired two flare bombs over the water.

At 1645 hours on 6 January 2004, in the open sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an Israeli military boat fired a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire over the water.

At 1859 hours on 8 January 2004, in the open sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an Israeli military boat fired a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire over the water.

At 0950 hours on 9 January 2004, in the open sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an Israeli military boat fired a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire. It returned later, at 2235 hours, and fired a number of bursts over the water.

Israeli acts of aggression

Between 1200 and 1240 hours on 2 January 2004 Israeli enemy forces fired a number of bursts of light- and medium-weapons fire from their positions inside the occupied Shab`a farmlands in various directions.

At 1955 hours on 3 January 2004 Israeli enemy forces fired two flare bombs from their position inside the Occupied Territories opposite the village of Yarun over the area surrounding the position.

Between 1255 and 1310 hours on 4 January 2004 Israeli enemy forces strafed the area surrounding their position, opposite the village of Yarun, with bursts of medium-weapons fire.

At 1745 hours on 5 January 2004 Israeli enemy forces strafed the area surrounding their position in Fashkul, inside the occupied Shab`a farmlands, with bursts of medium-weapons fire.

At 0130 hours on 6 January 2004 Israeli enemy forces fired a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire from their position opposite Labuna in the direction of the area surrounding the position.

At 1435 hours on 8 January 2004 Israeli enemy forces fired a number of bursts of medium-weapons fire from their position in Ruwaisa al-Alam in the direction of the area surrounding the position.

This grave violation is part of a series of persistent and provocative violations being committed by Israel against the integrity of Lebanon's airspace, territorial waters and territory, in contravention of the principles of international law, Security Council resolutions and the repeated calls by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the cessation of such violations.

In light of these violations and the increasingly threatening tone being used by Israel against Lebanon and against the integrity of its territory and its people, Lebanon calls on the Security Council to restrain Israel and to prevent it from carrying out these violations and threats, which are a threat to international security and peace. We call on Israel to bear full responsibility for whatever consequences may ensue.

In calling your attention to the gravity and possible consequences of these violations, I request that this letter of complaint be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 37, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sami **Kronfol**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative